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CORE LIST



The Summer Food Service Program provides meals to children from needy areas during the summer and at other times in areas with a continuous school calendar.

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Summer Food Service for Children

During the school year, millions of needy children get nutritious meals free or at a reduced price through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. But what about the summer when school's not in session?

If they live in an area that has a Summer Food Service Program for Children, they can continue to get the nourishment they need. Administered cooperatively by Federal, State, and local agencies, this nationwide program provides free meals to needy preschool and school-age children taking part in recreational or cultural activities sponsored by public or nonprofit private institutions.

Last year, the Summer Food Service Program reached 3.7 million children at 24,830 sites run by 2,149 sponsoring agencies. As in the previous 6 years the program has been in operation, sponsoring agencies included local school systems, civic and church groups, day care centers, and other nonprofit service institutions. Last year, for the first time, residential camps were also sponsors.

Although these sponsoring agencies varied in size and in detail of operation, all had to operate the summer feeding program according to the Federal regulations governing the program. And all had to be approved by the appropriate State agency or the regional office of FNS, which administers the program in cooperation with the States.

The following articles are about some of the people involved in last year's summer program—people at the State level, who have primary responsibility for administering the program, and people from local agencies, who actually run it.

Maryland's summer coordinators stress the importance of planning early and working closely with local sponsors. By doing this, they've developed a program they are proud of.

It doesn't snow much in Baltimore. It gets cold, but it rarely snows. Some conjecture that the city, famed for its ports and sports, lies too close to water to get cold enough for snow. But to Shelia Terry, it doesn't make much difference whether it snows or not. Because in the heart of winter, she's thinking of the next hot sunny Baltimore summer.

Sheila Terry is the Maryland State agency's coordinator of the State's summer feeding program, and it's her job to plan every aspect of how the State can best organize and administer a program that reaches nearly 50,000 needy children for a span of 8 weeks. Some 30,000 of these children live in Baltimore.

How does she do it? She starts early enough to thoroughly organize every facet of the upcoming summer program in advance. And she does all this with a very small staff, working only with one other full-time co-worker, her supervisor, Sherry High, and four monitors employed during the summer months. In many ways, Sheila Terry must rely mainly on her own efforts to ensure the success of Maryland's summer program.

Informing potential sponsors

Beginning this careful process in the fall, the program coordinators start by contacting potential sponsors for the coming summer. They send letters to groups ranging from local governing bodies to volunteer nonprofit organizations, such as YWCA's and YMCA's, the Council of Churches, the Children's Fresh Air Society, 4-H Clubs, and summer camps.

A few weeks later, they follow

up with fact sheets, which briefly explain how the program works and some of the key responsibilities involved for the sponsor. And, finally, they send planning materials and instructions to groups which have expressed interest in learning more details.

Written agreement used

The Maryland State agency staff is very specific in drawing up its informational materials, particularly the agreement to be used between the agency and the sponsor. "There's a very good reason for this," states Ms. Terry. "The performance of sponsoring agencies depends on knowing what their responsibilities are. We emphasize that they *must* serve meals that meet specific nutritional requirements, make sure the children consume their meals on the site, maintain daily attendance records, and provide sufficient supervisory and operating personnel to properly manage and monitor each site."

She adds, "Sponsors must also maintain complete and accurate records on program expenditures and income from all sources."

According to Ms. Terry, the State agency also works closely with sponsors to make sure they are aware of all of the fiscal and administrative responsibilities that are involved.

"Putting it in writing, as the saying goes, heads off all kinds of misunderstandings," adds Sherry High. "We've found Maryland sponsors to be very cooperative and responsive in trying to meet the terms of their agreement with the State agency. Potential sponsors who are unwilling, or unable, to comply with the conditions specified in the contract are few and far between. They realize that there's no advantage for them to enter into an agreement they can't or won't keep."

Meetings with applicants helpful

In the winter and spring, Sheila Terry meets personally with all potential sponsors before approving their applications. This allows the prospective sponsors to ask any questions they might have, and to seek advice, if they need it, on how to overcome possible difficulties, such as limited space and storage facilities.

The Maryland State agency is committed to doing all it can to assist potential sponsors in meeting the terms of the agreement. "We feel we have a special responsibility to make sure that the smaller, less formally organized groups are not discouraged from becoming sponsors," Ms. Terry states. "We want to make sure they're not intimidated by the agreement and that they understand it."

She adds, "A representative from the local government is usually a lot more at ease dealing with a contract like ours than, say, a representative of a newly formed block association. By meeting with all potential sponsors, we can talk with them face-to-face and encourage them. We're not just sending them a piece of paper and saying 'sign here.'"

The State coordinators meet with former sponsors, too, even though these sponsors may have been operating the program for some time. For example, they have frequent meetings with people from the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Manpower Resources, the agency which last summer operated 261 feeding sites. The mayor's office has been a summer feeding sponsor since 1972, and maintains its own summer lunch office with a full-time coordinator.

"Before the program opened last year, we met many times with the mayor's summer feeding staff

—training, advising, coordinating, and discussing," says Ms. Terry. "Baltimore can be very proud of its summer feeding program," she says, "and the mayor's office deserves a lot of credit for the fine job it does managing such a massive operation."

Work of monitors is crucial

Once the summer is underway, the four State monitors visit the offices of all sponsors, and during the course of the summer, they visit 87 percent of all the sites. Last year there were 409 sites throughout Maryland.

All large sponsors—with multiple sites—have their own site monitors, who visit each site no less than once a week. In the city of Baltimore, the mayor's office employs 10 monitors, and each of them is responsible for visiting 25 sites a week.

The relationship between State agency and sponsoring agency monitors is excellent. According to State representatives, sponsoring agency monitors show a great deal of concern and responsibility toward making operations at their sites run as smoothly as possible.

"They have an enormous amount to learn about the program's rules and procedures—that's quite a feat," points out Ella Killette, who during the school year teaches nutrition and foods in a Baltimore county high school, and who is a former site supervisor.

As a monitor for the State agency, Ms. Killette visits nearly 100 sites during the course of the summer at least once, unless there is evidence of a problem. On her first visit to a site, she notifies the site supervisor or sponsor of any corrective action needed. If she spots a problem, she goes back a second time. And if the problem is still there on a third visit, the sponsor receives a 48-hour termination notice.

"We're lucky, though," she observes. "The site monitors usually

do such a good job correcting their own problems that they make our job very easy."

Sheila Terry adds, "We do our best to head off problems from the very start. If we come across the same problem at more than one site—say, a problem where a vendor is delivering incomplete meals—our office issues an instruction advising all sponsors to be on the lookout for similar problems at their sites." She continues, "At first we received many calls from sponsors saying, 'Why are you sending us an instruction?



This isn't happening at our sites.' But soon they accepted the idea of receiving our little reminders."

A special notice, indicating that corrective action is necessary, goes to the site where the problem occurred.

Menus planned in advance

In the Baltimore program, kids at every site eat the same meals city-wide. A standardized cycle menu is developed in the spring by a committee of 12 to 15 people for sites sponsored by the mayor's office. The committee consists of representatives from sponsoring agencies, as well as nutritionists from the Baltimore City health department, supervisory personnel from the Baltimore City public school system, city purchasing personnel, and State people.

"The planning of the summer's menus gets very specific," says Ms. Terry. "For example, a topic of discussion might be how much breasting to put on chicken." Once the group decides on the menu, and food specifications are finalized, the mayor's office invites bids. Last year the winning bid was from a caterer who charged 73.1 cents per lunch, well under the maximum Federal reimbursement level.

"A program we can be proud of"

"When we first started our summer feeding program in Maryland in 1970, we had the same kinds of problems that many other States have had. But, with experience, we've mastered most of our difficulties by working closely with our sponsors. Together, we've developed a program we can be proud of," concludes Sherry High. "And that's taken organization and commitment from all of us."

The Board of Education sponsors the summer feeding program in Cleveland, and the school food service staff serves lunches in the secure facilities of the city's public schools. Last year, the staff provided meals to an average of 27,400 children each day.

School food service director Constance Gallo is enthusiastic about using school facilities for the summer program. As she says, the arrangement enables both children and staff to benefit from the normal safeguards of the National School Lunch Program.

One big advantage of the arrangement is obvious to the children taking part in the playground activities sponsored by the city of Cleveland—they get the same high quality lunches they eat at school the rest of the year. The staff serves only the children's favorites. As Ms. Gallo says, there's no experimenting with new menus during the summer program—they want to make sure the kids get meals they'll like.

But the arrangement has other advantages that may not be so obvious to the children. For example, it makes use of school facilities that may otherwise be idle during the summer months. It provides jobs for school food service people. And it makes the program more enjoyable for the playground supervisors as well as the children.

Last summer, Ms. Gallo and her staff served lunches at 113 sites, mostly school cafeterias, with only a few exceptions. They served a total of 1,288,691 hot meals during the 47 serving days. Their peak day was in June, with 37,255 lunches.

The center of the food service system is the Board of Education's central kitchen, where all the lunches are prepared and packaged in individually sealed aluminum containers. The lunches are

delivered cold to school cafeterias, and heated and served as needed. There are virtually no wasted meals, since the school staff heats only the exact number of meals that will be required on any particular day.

Ms. Gallo explains, "In the summer program, we work essentially the same as we do in the regular school program. We use the same procedures in receiving, packaging, distributing, and reconstituting lunches." And, as in the regular program, there is daily supervision and training of cooks.

The food service director is proud that the strict controls of the National School Lunch Program continue through the summer. Because of the program's strict accountability, Ms. Gallo says, they are "ready for an audit at any time."

The information below tells how the Cleveland system actually works, with details on food preparation and storage, serving, and staffing. For sponsors wishing to start or improve their own programs, the Cleveland staff recommends five basic planning steps:

- *Study the regulations and get necessary USDA interpretations to make sure you understand them.* Everyone involved in the summer feeding program should be well informed before attempting to get into it, the Cleveland sponsors stress—"It's not a one-man show."

- *Line up the help. Include union representatives in your employee planning if there will be union members hired.* Cleveland's system employs only its well-trained school food service personnel, who do virtually the same tasks for the summer program as they do for the National School Lunch Program. They are paid for hours worked.

- *Determine the number of lunch sites needed.* A school system does this easily, since it has the National School Lunch Program records which indicate the numbers of needy children getting free or reduced-price lunches in any school in the city.

- *Develop the budget for USDA approval. Include all costs.*

- *Hold an orientation program for everyone who will be involved, so they know what to expect.* Cleveland held its orientation about 2 weeks before the program started. Experts from the school board instructed staff in program philosophy, and explained the roles of principals, food service and custodial staffs, and playground personnel.

Food preparation and storage

Because the children prefer hot meals, the summer program serves only hot entrees. Before the program begins, a registered dietitian plans the menus for the entire 47 serving days. The menus are based on what Ms. Gallo calls the "time-tested favorites" of the National School Lunch Program—such as hamburgers, pizza, toasted cheese sandwiches, and hot dogs. These are served with a variety of side dishes, but all meals include the five Type A lunch components served to elementary schoolchildren.

The central kitchen does not do any of the food preparation—all of the food is supplied by private contractors who prepare the cooked portions according to the food service division's specifications and freeze them. When the food arrives at the central kitchen, the school food service staff simply tags it according to date of

use, and stores it at the appropriate temperature. When they're ready to package the meals, they take out the foods they need.

During last year's summer program, the central kitchen produced an average of 27,418 lunches each day. The staff always works 2 days in advance—on Monday, for example, they pack the lunches that will be delivered to the schools on Wednesday. Each lunch gets packaged in two parts—the portions of the meal that will be frozen and reheated at the schools go in aluminum foil trays. The foods to be kept refrigerated go into another package, along with all utensils. Both sections go back into the freezer or refrigerator until they are delivered, 2 days later, to satellite schools. Milk is delivered separately by contracting dairies.

The storage system is important at both the central kitchen and the school cafeterias, each of which keeps a 2-day supply of meals on hand. Staff at the central kitchen know exactly how many lunches were used the previous day by satellite kitchens. Meals are adjusted daily, according to reported inventory.

In case of an emergency, such as equipment failure in the central kitchen, each school cafeteria can carry on routinely with its lunch program for 2 days. And if more children than expected show up for lunch on any particular day, the staff can simply borrow meals from the next day's supply.

Staffing the system

The Cleveland school food service division makes extensive use of private contractors in its school lunch program. Some 25 different firms have year-long contracts to supply food as well as utensils and services, such as deliveries. During the summer months, the division uses about half of these contractors. The food service staff says the experience

gained by the contractors in working with the school lunch program is a definite advantage to summer operations.

The central kitchen and school cafeterias are staffed with the well-trained school food service employees. A little more than a third of the staff works at the central kitchen—92 people work as needed from 2 to 7 hours a day, depending on production, for the first 3 weeks. After that, about 45 work, also as needed, from 2 to 7 hours a day.

An additional 319 people work at the schools. Each school has one "satellite cook" and one "back-up cook." The satellite cook keeps track of deliveries, checks freezer and refrigerator temperatures, gets the daily reports from playground supervisors on how many children will be coming for lunch, and oversees heating, serving, and cleaning up. She also makes daily calls to the central kitchen to report the number of meals served.

The system employs eight area managers, also experienced food service personnel, who oversee the operation of about 13 schools each. These area managers troubleshoot problems, check freezer temperatures, make sure each school has the proper number of meals, and sometimes make an inventory if there is a problem. When the summer program is well underway, some of the managers are no longer needed.

Serving

The serving system is based on careful planning and cooperation between the food service staff and the playground supervisors. Every morning, the satellite cook gets a call from the supervisors of the playground areas the school

serves. The cook simply has to take that many meals out of storage.

The playground sites are all planned close enough so the recreation supervisors can walk the children to the school. Since all supervisors know exactly when to bring in their individual groups, the flow of children through the cafeteria is orderly, and each child has a seat. Some schools serve as many as 500 children from 8 different playground areas, but enough school board employees are around to make sure things go smoothly.

Under this arrangement, summer participants and program staff are the only people who enter the buildings. There are no problems with ineligible children or adults harassing the staff for free lunches, and no food is allowed out of the school to be discarded or given away. When the weather is bad, the cafeteria tables are rolled out of the way after lunch, and the space is used for games.

Outreach

The food service division considers itself an important part of the community. "We run this program because these are our children, and we want to provide for them," Ms. Gallo says. She and her staff reach out to other organizations, such as the Salvation Army and the Council of Churches, to tell them of the availability of the summer food program. But these organizations must bring their children to the public schools for lunch.

Problems?

"No," says Connie Gallo. "If you're feeding children every day, you know how it's done. Our only problem was determining if the children wanted hot foods rather than cold. And it didn't take us long to find that out. We just watched and listened."

Volunteers are the key to a small church-sponsored program which serves children from rural areas outside Atlanta. Volunteers working with food service get special training in meal preparation and program requirements.

"Door secure?"

"Door secure."

"Clear for turn?"

"All clear."

An airline crew running a pre-flight checklist? No, it's a bus driver and his passengers, beginning a routine they carried out each weekday last summer.

The driver was Al Laney, a retired commercial pilot who rose at 5 o'clock each morning during July to drive a borrowed school bus all over the northern part of Fulton County, Georgia. He was a volunteer helping with the summer program run by the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church in suburban Atlanta. And it was his job to pick up the 36 children who came to the Holy Innocents School for a program of educational and recreational activities.

The children anxiously awaited their turns to play co-pilot and navigator. They took the check-out procedure very seriously. They knew that Al always depended on his "crew" to carry out their assigned tasks—opening and closing the bus doors, operating the turn signals, watching for late arrivals at the bus stop. The children loved Al, and it was obvious that he loved them, too.

Al Laney was one of 80 volunteers who helped with the summer program last year. As the program's director, Carol Gantt, explained, the church sees the program as one that benefits the people who run it as well as the

children it serves. "The program is a unique and beautiful opportunity to share our skills, our knowledge, and our love with those who can benefit from it, while the children give us the opportunity to grow and learn about ourselves," she said.

Developed by a volunteer

Holy Innocents Rector Robert Johnson echoes this sentiment, "The parish is here not only to minister to our own needs as families but also to reach out into the community."

The program began in 1971, the year before Father Johnson's arrival at Holy Innocents. His predecessor thought the parish should have a program that would reach out to disadvantaged youth, and he enlisted a talented and enthusiastic volunteer to develop the summer program. Using the facilities of the Holy Innocents School, the program was designed to provide remedial help to students who needed it, as well as recreational activities and food service. With backing from some of the school's teachers, the program—though shaky—was off the ground. That summer, a rented bus, books and lunches cost about \$2,500 in total.

When Father Johnson came to Holy Innocents, the church was having a hard time financially, and was ready to drop the program. But the church managed to scrape together about \$2,000 from contributions from parishioners, civic clubs, and other sources. And the following year, additional

money came from bazaar proceedings, as well as from the vestry and other area churches.

Getting Federal funding

In 1973, the church applied for Federal reimbursement under the Special Food Service Program, and as Ms. Gantt said, getting authorization to take part in the program "really took the crunch off the budget." Since then, the church has sponsored a feeding program each summer.

When the church first applied, the Holy Innocents program already met most of the requirements of the Special Food Service Program. It was sponsored by a nonprofit institution; it served children from areas of poverty; it had organized activities in addition to food service; and it used food service facilities approved by the county health department.

To receive approval for funding, the church had to document the need of the areas the children came from, and revise its personnel training to include instructions on USDA program regulations and responsibilities.

Now, several weeks before the start of each summer's program, there's a special training session for the 15-20 volunteers who take turns assisting food service director Margaret Hawkins. And Ms. Hawkins attends additional training sessions sponsored by FNS.

Last summer, the volunteers served breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack to the 36 children enrolled in the program. The church received a 48.25 cent reimbursement for each breakfast and a 87.25 cent reimbursement for each lunch.

A variety of foods offered

According to Carol Gantt, the first objective of the food service

program was to meet USDA requirements; the second was to give the kids foods they like. And the food service staff made special efforts to make the meals appealing. For breakfast, the church served such foods as French toast, sausage and biscuits, waffles, scrambled eggs and English muffins. Each child received 8 ounces of both milk and fruit juice.

Luncheon entrees included hot dogs, hamburgers, sloppy joes, tuna, and pizza, all served with fruit, vegetables, and milk. Once a week, lunch included ice cream as a special treat.

Usually, one or two volunteers helped Ms. Hawkins prepare breakfast, and two or three helped her prepare lunch. In addition to supervising food preparation and menu planning, Ms. Hawkins was also in charge of all recordkeeping and food purchasing. She ordered some of the food from institutional suppliers, and she selected some fresh produce from the Atlanta Farmers' Market. She also bought bread and eggs at her grocery store when they were on sale.

An important support feature

The church is proud of this food service operation and sees it as an important support feature for the academic and recreational activities which fill the children's day. The main activities are in the morning, when children get remedial help with reading and math, and take part in such "enrichment activities" as music, and arts and crafts.

Four afternoons a week, the children go swimming in private pools offered by the parishioners. And every Friday, they go on field trips, planned especially to give these rural children opportunities to enjoy city activities. As Carol Gantt explained, most of the children come from rural areas outside Atlanta, so things like visiting the zoo don't impress them.

"They're country kids," she said. "They've got cows and horses in their own backyards." The field trips last year included a tour of Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport, a visit to an art museum, an afternoon in a city park, and an ice skating party—new experiences for most of the children.

Program participants are drawn from four schools whose principals are familiar with the program. The principals recommend students they feel would most benefit from remedial help or enrichment activities. Since there are usually more applications than the program can accept, first priority goes to students who previously took part, and to children from the same family.

Some of the teachers, accustomed to having 9 months with the children, have to scale down their expectations for the 4-week program. Nina Collins, morning program director said, "Volunteers can get a little discouraged if they go into the program with the idea that they're going to teach those children a lot academically. Sometimes it happens. We had one little boy last year who had failed first grade twice. On the second day of the program, he suddenly caught on to the difference between a consonant and a vowel. He was so excited that he worked eight pages in his workbook before he would quit. Things like that make the program worth it."

Sponsors would like to do more

Despite the program's achievements, the people at Holy Inno-

cents think there's room for improvement. Father Johnson said, "We'd like to do a lot of things that we just don't have time or money to do right now—like have better follow-up."

Some people ask why the program can't be longer than 4 weeks. "Well," said Father Johnson, "when you're depending on volunteers, that's about as long as you can make it. Some people also ask why we don't take more children, but, again, we're depending on volunteers and money." He added, "We have the space for more, but we'd rather run a small, fine program than enlarge it to where we can't accomplish what we set out to."

According to Carol Gantt, the biggest problem is scheduling volunteers. "A whole month is a large chunk of time to give up, so it takes a lot of people to run the program—one giving 2 weeks here, another giving 2 weeks there. We're fortunate in that this parish just keeps on growing, and we keep getting new people."

Some of last year's 80 volunteers came from civic groups, but most of them were from the parish. To recruit volunteers, Holy Innocents uses a brochure, designed by a volunteer who is a commercial artist.

Everyone who worked with the summer program praised it and agreed that the problems are minor compared to the accomplishments. Nina Collins summed up the general feeling, "I think the program is the finest thing the church does all year."

Cooking over open stoves, camp counselors in South Carolina prepared breakfast, lunch, and supper for city youngsters taking part in a special excursion at the end of last summer. The regular program is 7 weeks long.

The girls spent part of the hot afternoon playing in the cool water and sliding down the river's mossy banks. Then slowly, with the help of their counselors, they made their way over rocks and through rapids to the point where the river cascaded over a cliff into a spectacular waterfall.

They were a long way from their homes in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. And the distance was more than miles.

The children—who were primarily from low-income families—were taking part in a 5-day camping trip at Table Rock State Park, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. They were attending one of three short camping sessions sponsored by Community Volunteers Service (CVS) of Myrtle Beach, and their excursion to the waterfall at Falling Rock Park was part of a planned program of activities that included arts, crafts, swimming, and hiking.

As Gordon Campbell, recreation director of CVS, explained: "These children are doing things that none of them have ever done before. Few of them have ever seen the mountains, and fewer still have ever climbed in the mountains, especially the two younger groups. They've just never done this before. They've never been out of their communities.

"I think we're giving them a sense of their own worth, I hope, and a sense of being able to do things that they never thought they could do."

Part of a larger program

The three residential camp sessions, which served a total of 130

children, concluded a much larger 7-week day camp program sponsored by CVS. Although the children attended both camps free of charge, they "earned" their way to attend the residential camp through "good attendance and citizenship" in the day camp program, Mr. Campbell pointed out.

FNS provided reimbursement for food expenses through the Summer Food Service Program for Children. All of the meals met the program's nutritional requirements, and were either served cold or cooked over two portable stoves. In addition to breakfast, lunch, and dinner, the children were served afternoon and evening snacks. Each day a counselor shopped for perishable items, like milk, fresh fruits, and vegetables at food stores in a nearby town.

The salaries of most of the staff members were paid by the Wacamaw Economic Opportunity Council. And the State Division of Economic Opportunity paid other expenses, like campsite rental and transportation costs.

In addition, CVS received a lot of community support for the camp. Two Boy Scout troops on the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base loaned them tents; a local car dealership loaned them a station wagon; and the local transit company leased them a bus for \$1.00. For the day camp program, many local establishments—such as a roller skating rink, an amusement park, and a movie theater—gave the children free admission.

As Dennis McCabe, assistant recreation director for CVS, explained: "A lot of people came to bat for us; otherwise we couldn't possibly have afforded all the things we did. People in the community really want to help out the underprivileged, it seems. They're aware of the need, and they want to help out when they can." ☆

New serving systems get results

By Ronald Rhodes and Frank Johnson

School administrators in Toledo and Santa Fe say they're getting more lunch customers these days, thanks to two new serving systems. The systems offer students more choice and more time to enjoy their meals in pleasant surroundings.



There's more choice for students. Participation is up. Plate waste is down. And labor costs have decreased, while gross sales have increased.

According to school officials in Toledo, Ohio, these are just some of the results of the "Toledo Scramble," the new food service system being used at seven area high schools. Scramble is a "free-flow" system in which students make their lunch selections at several different serving stations. Edward Goodwin, food services director for Toledo, says that the free-flow system has proven much more efficient than the conventional cafeteria arrangement, where everyone is served from one line.

The city was able to implement the new system when a major bond provided money to put a vocational skill center in each high school and to upgrade cafeteria facilities in all schools. Before selecting the free-flow system, the Board of Education and a food service advisory committee made a lengthy study of a number of alternatives. Mr. Goodwin explained that what they were looking for was a serving arrangement that would provide students with more choice and also help them learn to make wise food choices and accept a wide variety of foods.

"It was of primary importance that we offer a more appealing selection of Type A meals by providing four or five entree selections every day while allowing students to make up plate combinations any way they wanted," explains Mr. Goodwin.

Another important consideration, the food service director pointed out, was the need to control labor costs and make the most efficient use of equipment, as well as time and skills of employees.

"With Scramble," he said, "we

have found that we are able to meet these goals and to serve all students in the first 12 minutes of each 30-minute period. These goals were much harder to accomplish with the more conventional, self-contained cafeterias."

Many selections offered

Like all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program, Toledo plans menus based on the Type A lunch pattern. Designed to provide one-third or more of the nutrients students need each day, the menu pattern includes foods from the four major food groups. Because broad food choices are possible within the Type A pattern, a large variety of food practices can be considered in menu planning.

Students have the option of buying menu items on an a la carte or Type A basis. If students decide upon the Type A menu, they make their selections according to a color-coded system. The choices include:

- Six hot sandwiches—five standard, and one daily special.
- Two hot entrees with a roll and butter or margarine.

"With Scramble we have found that... we are able to serve all students in the first 12 minutes of each 30-minute period."

- A cooked vegetable, tossed salad, potato salad, fresh relish packet, cole slaw, french fries, or mashed potatoes with gravy.
- Fruit jello, three canned fruits, two fresh fruits, selection of frozen juice bars, or orange juice.

The students have a choice of unflavored, chocolate, or 2-percent milk. When students enter the Scramble serving area, they pass through a turnstile where they pick up disposable trays. Then they select their menu items from different stations scattered about the area. These stations consist of self-service portable food dispensing units, hot and cold cabinets, drink dispensers, and ice cream freezers. There is

also a conventional hot table from which hot foods may be selected. Mr. Goodwin explains, "The system works out so that every day we have two hot entrees, such as spaghetti and roast turkey, which are cooked in the school. Under Type A, we also have one vegetable, mashed potatoes, french fried potatoes or both, and a vegetable-type soup."

The most popular plate is a cheeseburger and french fries, with a trend that is almost entirely toward sandwiches. "In a school with 1,000 Type A lunches sold each day," Mr. Goodwin adds, "it's not unusual to have 800 students select a sandwich combination to meet their Type A meal requirements."

The school also has a full-line vending system for students who decide not to enter the serving area. In this area, students can purchase sandwiches, cold drinks, milk, and ice cream.

Toledo uses pricing to encourage students to choose Type A meals

"...because students are given the opportunity to select exactly what they want to eat, plate waste is no longer as much of a problem."

and nutritious snacks—these foods have much lower prices than "non-nutritious" items.

Preparation and serving

Menu items are prepared in either the cafeteria kitchen or a central commissary. All hot entrees, such as soup, chili, and vegetables, are prepared at the central commissary and sealed in cellophane oven-proof bags for delivery to the school. At the school, the sandwiches are heated in a convection oven before being loaded in hot food dispensing units in the serving area. Dished fruits, salads, and other a la carte items are also prepared at the central commissary where they are packaged in plastic dishes and sealed. In the Scramble area, these are packed in baskets that fit into the cold food dispensing units.

As it works at Toledo's DeVilbiss High School, the Scramble system requires a larger serving area than the conventional school cafeteria, but the overall space is about the same because of a smaller kitchen. The kitchen area is simple, and consists of a walk-in cooler freezer, three ovens, a four-burner range, and a steamer-kettle combination. For a facility that can serve from 100 to 1,500 Type A lunches, total installation costs are under \$70,000.

The equipment in the Scramble area itself is all fiberglass, done in tangerines, blues, and yellows rather than flat, stainless steel. All hot foods are served from bright red counters, while cold foods are served from blue counters, and snacks or a la carte items are served from yellow counters. Mr. Goodwin noted that the color key, in addition to brightening the room, also serves as an aid to students in finding various lunch components. Another advantage to the new equipment is that it is all portable—the only fixed counter is the beverage area. Portability makes cleaning easier, the food service director adds.

Plate waste is down

Both the Toledo School Board and the Advisory Committee are particularly pleased with the substantial reduction in plate waste since the new system began. Irene Erdman, Toledo school food service coordinator, notes, "Our system used to be take-it-or-leave-it, and we found that many students took the full Type A meal and threw away anywhere from one-half to two-thirds of it. Under Scramble, because students are given the opportunity to select exactly what they want to eat, plate waste is no longer as much of a problem."

Ms. Erdman adds that the system also results in less waste because it allows students more time to eat in a more relaxed atmosphere. After students have made their selections, they pass through any of four cashier lines on their way to the dining room. This eliminates waiting time, since they usually select the shortest line. The normal flow through the system is approximately 320 students

"The system is providing our students with the best possible lunches at a minimum cost, while effectively increasing the use of school food service facilities and personnel."

during each period.

The school administration is also giving Scramble credit for a reduction in disciplinary problems during lunch periods. Before Scramble, one lunch period would often extend into the next, and pushing or other disturbances would often result.

Student reaction

The new system has received mixed comments from the students themselves, but most students favor this system over the previous one. Miriam Leeper, a senior, comments, "This system is good because of better selections of food. Also, I remember a couple of times last year when my lunch would consist of waiting in line for almost the entire lunch period, then sitting down, and quickly eating my favorites and throwing away what I never wanted in the first place."

"I only wish that the new system had been started when I first was here," she added, "because now I actually enjoy the lunch period and the available foods."

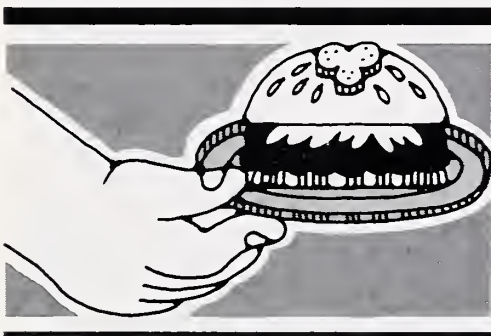
Participation is up

One problem that did occur as a result of the new arrangement was criticism that students might choose to eat snacks instead of well-balanced meals. Ms. Erdman points out that when this issue was placed before the Advisory Committee, the final decision was to let high school students make their own choices. She says, "I believe increased participation largely resulted from the decision that our school food service program made. Choice is important to secondary students, and I believe they deserve to have it."

"With the Scramble system," adds Mr. Goodwin, "we are now seeing the students selecting foods

they like and enjoy and will eat. And if a student eats a cheeseburger on an enriched bun, vitamin fortified french fries, fruit jello, and milk, he's getting a very nutritious meal." This new system has far exceeded everyone's expectations in some areas, according to the food service director.

"We believe it will meet other expectations as time passes," he says. "The system is providing our students with the best possible lunches at a minimum cost, while effectively increasing the use of school food service facilities and personnel."



Can high school students on an open campus be persuaded to stay at school during the noon hour? Santa Fe, New Mexico, school administrators believe they can—if the noon meal is appealing, and the cafeteria is attractive.

That's why they have invested around \$1 million in the building of a new cafeteria and activity center, located between the Santa Fe High School's main building and the vocational building.

The focal point of the facility uses a new concept in school food service—it's a revolving counter designed to serve a peak of 24 students per minute.

Former State school food service director Gretchen Plagge first became interested in the revolving serving counter when she saw it at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Aware that Santa Fe was planning a new cafeteria, she described the arrangement to Santa Fe's then newly appointed food service director, Juan Romero. Admittedly a little reluctant at first, he soon became sold on the idea.

After consultants from FNS discussed the idea at a Santa Fe Board

meeting, board members also became convinced they'd like to try this new approach.

A circular design

As planning got underway, architect Bernabe Romero actually designed the new building around the serving counter. "Since the food would move from the kitchen to the revolving counter and then to the dining area, it seemed only natural for everything to radiate to the counter in the center," he pointed out. "We planned it so the circular design of the entire building, including the kitchen, would emphasize the movement of the food service system to the center."

And the plans worked; anyone entering the serving area cannot help but notice the revolving counter and all the activity around it. The counter revolves constantly during lunch hour. Its spoke-like arrangement allows food service personnel to fill one side of shelves as the counter turns, while students make their selections from the other side.

Equipped with four tiers, the counter displays the food and has built-in heat lamps and cooling elements to keep food at the proper temperatures.

The mechanized counter,

"We planned it so the circular design of the entire building, including the kitchen, would emphasize the movement of the food service system to the center."

though, is just one of the outstanding features of the new building. The modern dining area is spectacular, with its white walls and blue ceiling. Large rectangular light fixtures made from acoustical material contrast with the blue ceiling and reduce the noise level. On the walls are numerous colored panels, also acoustical, in colors ranging from deep orange to blue and purple.

The counter area is raised about

3 feet above the dining level, and the space in front of the counter can easily be used for stage and musical presentations.

New plans for menus, too

In addition to the building and the service counter, Santa Fe High School is trying to increase student interest by adding more choices to its menu. Eventually, the 3,700 high school students will have seven entrees to choose from each day. These will include pizza, hamburgers, and tacos. And to complete the meal, students will select from french fries, salads, milkshakes, and milk.

"We hope this type of menu will be more appealing to the students than traditional cafeteria fare, and encourage them to eat lunch here," says food service director Romero. He points out that this idea seems to already be working well in schools in nearby Las Vegas, Nevada, and Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Why all the emphasis on food service in Santa Fe?

"We think that it's important for our students to stay on campus and get a balanced meal during the noon hour," said James Miller, Santa Fe school superintendent.

"With a 165-acre campus, it is impossible to see that students stay at school all day. This type of facility and food service should make the students want to stay here at noon."

And how have the students reacted? With a lot of enthusiasm, according to the superintendent.

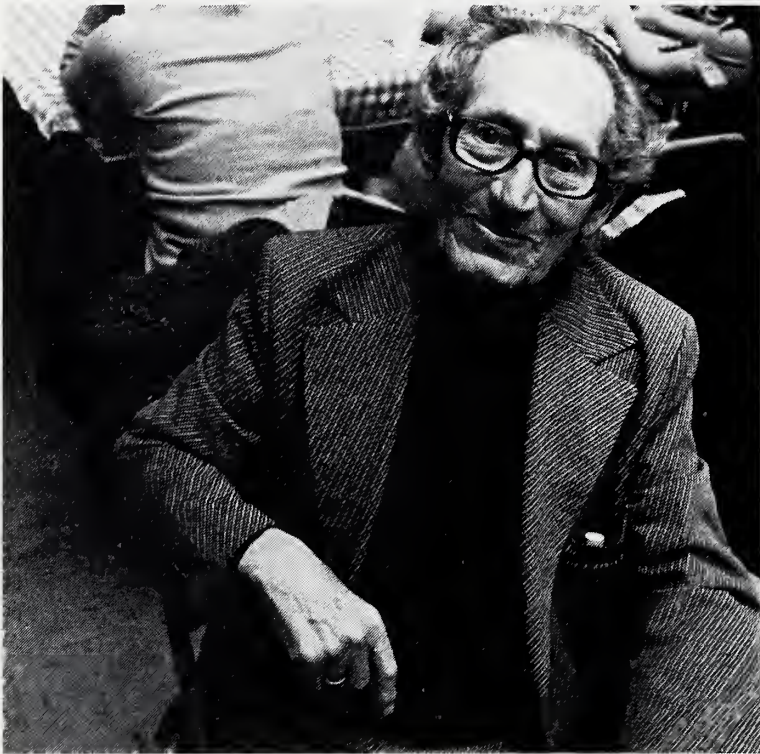
At the first pep rally held at the school this year, the superintendent gave a short address, pointing out all the new facilities the school had to offer this year—the new food service facility was high on the list. "The students seemed more excited about this building than the new gymnasium," Dr. Miller stated.

Real indication of student interest, though, has shown up in the sharp increase in lunch participation. During the first week of operation, the number of students eating school lunches jumped from an average of around 600 to more than 1,200. ☆

Food For Life

By Linda Feldman

A cooperative effort by public and private agencies is enabling hundreds of elderly people to get the food help they need.



Murray Solomon patiently stood in line, waiting to pick up the one hot meal his wife would have that day.

Until recently, Mr. Solomon was able to provide enough money to buy food that Mrs. Solomon prepared according to the strict kosher dietary laws they have followed all of their lives.

These dietary laws are extremely important to the Solomons. As religious Jews, the Solomons adhere strictly to the dietary laws set down in the Bible—in the Book of Deuteronomy. Kosher means “permitted,” and Deuteronomy explicitly prescribes what foods can be eaten.

Jews who “keep kosher” do not eat dairy foods with meat. They keep separate sets of dishes for each. They eat the meat of certain animals only, and those animals must be slaughtered “in a humane way” as prescribed in the Book of Deuteronomy.

Mrs. Solomon is no longer able to cook. She is permanently disabled, and Mr. Solomon cannot personally provide her with adequate nutritional care within the strict kosher laws.

Nevertheless, the couple is fortunate. They are able to take advantage of the Nutrition Program for the Elderly, authorized by Title VII of the Older Americans Act, as amended. Funded by HEW with donated food assistance from USDA, Title VII projects provide meals and companionship to elderly people in congregate settings, as well as home-delivered meals to the home bound.

The Solomons participate in the Brighton Older Adult Luncheon Club in Brooklyn, New York. The Brighton Club is one of 22 Title VII nutrition programs that are now able to provide kosher meals as a result of a processing contract worked out between the Food and Nutrition Service and the Board of Jewish Education of greater New York.

Under this arrangement, local kosher food processors bid to supply USDA with products in the regular purchase program. If awarded the contract, the vendor

produces a kosher product which is allocated to the Board of Jewish Education for distribution to Title VII projects and Jewish day schools, or “yeshivas.” The additional charges for making kosher products are billed to the board, which pays the processor and in turn gets reimbursed from the schools and projects.

First begun in schools

“The program is marvelous,” says Carrie Lipsig, who masterminded the processing and distribution system. Ms. Lipsig is director of the board’s department of food services, and she was responsible for getting kosher products first produced from USDA foods in 1972 for distribution to yeshivas in New York City. That school program has since grown to include distribution in States throughout the Nation. The kosher program for the elderly is still limited to New York City, but Ms. Lipsig says the Board of Jewish Education is now working to find a way to expand it.

Participants see benefits

Murray Solomon may not know how the Brighton club gets the kosher foods to prepare the meals he and his wife enjoy. But he does know what the program means to them.

“If not for this lunch program,” he says in his thick Yiddish accent, “my wife couldn’t make it. I can’t afford to feed her well with kosher foods, and don’t really know how. The program lets me get out, see other people, and eat a delicious meal. Then I come home to my wife’s anxious, expectant smile, she eats, and we are happy.”

The Solomons are two of the nearly 330,000 elderly people who benefit from meals and companionship at the 800 Title VII nutrition projects currently in operation. But there are many more older Americans who are eligible for the program. It has been estimated that there are some 8 or 9 million people over 60 who qualify. To be eligible, a person must be over 60 and live in an area that operates

such a program. Title VII projects operate only in areas where there is a high proportion of people age 60 and over whose incomes are below the current Census Bureau poverty level. Spouses are also eligible.

Why is participation so low?

Juan del Castillo, director of USDA’s food distribution program, suggests several reasons why more people don’t participate. “Many people have to travel too far,” he says. “Others provide for their own social needs. And some feel there’s a stigma in participating in a program for senior citizens.”

He adds, “Many elderly people have no concept of leaving their homes to seek out assistance, to seek out companionship. It’s a matter of pride and ignorance.”

Another problem is that many elderly people, like the Solomons, have specific dietary needs that most nutrition projects for the elderly do not meet. But according to Mr. Castillo, the Federal Government can help do something to change this.

“The Federal Government can do more for special needs,” he says. “We’re able to provide kosher donated foods to the 22 New York projects at no expense to the taxpayer. And we can improve services for other Title VII projects serving people with different dietary needs. We’re anxious to enlarge the program.”

A Federal-State-local program

Title VII of the 1972 Older Americans Act authorized a national program to operate in community centers, schools, and other public and nonprofit facilities where older people can find nutritional and social services in congregate settings.

Title VII projects are administered and 90 percent funded by the Administration on Aging of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare through cooperating State agencies.

USDA began providing donated foods to the projects in 1973, and currently donates 27-1/4 cents per meal in commodities to each project. This price is adjusted

annually, reflecting changes in the Consumer Price Index for food away from home. Donated foods include frozen meats and poultry, canned and dried fruits and vegetables, cheese, rice, flour, and margarine.

Title VII projects also provide home-delivered meals to regular participants, like Mrs. Solomon, who are unable to attend the meal service center. About 13 percent of all meals served are home-delivered.

All Title VII projects are required to serve at least 1 hot meal a day, 5 days a week. They must serve an average of 100 hot meals per day. The Brighton lunch club is no exception, serving an average of 210 meals a day in the social hall of a synagogue in the Brighton Beach-Coney Island area of Brooklyn.

There is no set charge for the meals at the centers; payment is on the basis of voluntary contributions. Each center does have a suggested contribution—at Brighton, it's 25 cents per meal—but no member is ever turned away. Membership is open to

area residents who are over 60 years old and their spouses.

Companionship is the key

For insurance purposes, the Brighton lunch club doesn't open to members until 9 a.m. Yet, on any given morning, 30 to 40 people gather under the synagogue's awning an hour or more before the doors open.

Elly Kleinman is the young and enthusiastic director of the club. As he says, the club gives these people "a stimulus to socialize, to get out of their loneliness." They come, day after day, even in sub-zero weather. For them, companionship is just as important as food.

Projects like the Brighton lunch club are healthy places for senior citizens—both physically and mentally. At the Brighton center, members take part in a myriad of scheduled activities from 9 o'clock in the morning to 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Forty volunteers, members of the club, lead their peers in such activities as rug weaving, bingo, choral singing, dance, a class in Jewish heritage, and drama.

The club also offers special events, such as speakers, outings to movies, legal advice, a "senior safety and crime prevention program," and a community social service clinic. In addition to the volunteers who lead the activities, the club has an elected advisory board, consisting of 5 officers and 11 advisors, and 2 newspaper editors who produce the *Brighton Senior News*.

"Before the club was established," says the club director, "these people didn't know what to do with themselves. They had no feeling of worth and importance left in this geared-for-the-young world. Now they take great pride in themselves and in their accomplishments and responsibilities here."

When the club first started 4 years ago, most of the members had small incomes. Then the club began an outreach effort. They distributed the monthly newspaper, and activities and information bulletins to senior citizen housing and local organizations. They held an outdoor summer fair where they sold arts and crafts which members had made. Through these and other outreach activities, the club enlisted many new members.

Meals are carefully prepared

The people sit patiently, waiting for their lunches. On this day, volunteers serve them grapefruit juice, turkey roll, tomato sauce, chinese noodles, rice, bread, plums, and coffee. The turkey roll, tomato paste for the sauce, plums, and rice are all USDA-donated foods.

A nutritionist from the New York City Department for Aging comes to the center periodically to work with the cook, Hania Laffel. The nutritionist helps develop menus, and checks the kitchen to make sure the food is handled properly.

Ms. Laffel, an immigrant from Poland, spent 4 years in concentration camps during World War II. She speaks in melodic broken English, "Many of these people have had a hard time over the years. They have worked hard for



Cook Hania Laffel supervises meal preparation in the kitchen of the

Brighton center. She and her staff prepare about 220 meals each day.

the little they've saved here, but this country has been good to us. I am glad to see old people have a place to come to give them life, and to give them good things to eat. God bless America," she sighs.

Ms. Leffel is helped by an assistant cook, and two elderly workers—recent Russian immigrants—who speak no English. Her kitchen is clean, but crowded. "It's a tribute to Hania's talents that she cooks meals for 200-220 people a day and prepares 30 homebound meals," says Mr. Kleinman.

He explains that his club is probably the only group of its kind in the area currently serving homebound meals. "The program is supposed to be 'meals on wheels,' but we have no wheels," says Mr. Kleinman. Instead, relatives or neighbors take some meals to homebound members.

Often the city department for aging, hospitals, and other area agencies refer people to the Brighton club. Mr. Kleinman says, "The program is a popular necessity. There is always a waiting

list of at least one or two names. We try to accommodate as many as we can squeeze in."

There are some problems

According to Carrie Lipsig, a big problem that clubs like Brighton have is lack of storage for the foods. "USDA provides us with all the food we are entitled to receive as long as there is storage space," she explains. "But the kitchens are not adequately equipped to store all of the food they're offered through this program. The Brighton club, for example, has to store some of its frozen meat and cheese in other places until freezer space is available there."

Another big problem is funding. "We get no special financial help from the Government," says Ms. Lipsig. "We must pay the processors first, and then wait to get reimbursed from participating yeshivas and projects for the elderly. Fortunately, we have funds to cover this cash outlay in the New York area, however, we must have some sort of advance funding to implement distribution to additional

projects in upstate New York."

Variety of foods offered

USDA offers for bids frozen ground beef, frozen whole turkeys, frozen cut-up chickens, cooked turkey rolls, and process cheese. Kosher processors who win contracts for these items work with Ms. Lipsig and the New York State distributing agencies to offer these basic donated foods to schools and projects for the elderly. In addition, meat processors use the kosher ground beef to make such items as frankfurters and salami.

Through the kosher processors, these nutrition projects for the elderly get donated foods which are economical and which can be prepared in a variety of ways.

"With all we save from the donated foods we get," says Elly Kleinman, "we can have much lower food costs. And, we can offer a more varied and interesting menu."

Like all the people who work with him, Elly Kleinman is proud to be serving the elders of his community—those like the Solomons who can no longer take care of themselves properly.

By law, States must ensure that nutrition projects for the elderly are initiated to serve minority groups, Native Americans, and limited English-speaking people, at least in proportion to their numbers within each State. "We are looking forward to the day when other minority groups ask us for help in developing projects which help serve their own special dietary needs," says Juan del Castillo.

Today, older Americans are beginning to assert themselves as a collective force. "Grey power" is coming into vogue. But it takes centers like the Brighton Older Adult Luncheon Club to get our older citizens from behind their lonely walls to socialize, to feel important, to feel that they are still productive and vital members of their community.

"We must remember," says Carrie Lipsig, "that they once provided for us. We must now fight to provide for them." ☆



This participant is one of the many who volunteer to serve lunch. The

menu features turkey roll with tomato sauce, rice, bread and plums.

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